

## **SY 2021-22 LEA Health and Safety Plans**

**LEA Name: The Sojourner Truth School PCS**

**LEA Contact: Justin Lessek**

**LEA Type: Middle School**

**Date Generated: 08/04/2021**

### **Background and Purpose**

[OSSE's Health and Safety Guidance for Schools](#) is issued for LEAs and private, parochial and independent schools (schools). LEAs and schools must develop and submit to OSSE comprehensive health and safety plans. This plan is intended to provide the public with information on how the LEA will support the safe reopening and operation of school buildings, including guidelines on masking, social distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, and appropriate response to a positive COVID-19 case.

OSSE reviewed each LEA's responses to the questions for clarity, completeness, and compliance with the DC Health and OSSE health and safety guidance for schools and provided feedback to the LEA. Before publication, LEA's were given the opportunity to revise their responses based on OSSE's feedback. LEAs and schools are responsible for incorporating additional or updated public health guidance into their policies and procedures throughout the school year as such guidance is released.

## Face Masks

### **1. Provide the LEA's plan to comply with the requirements to:**

- **a. except for specific circumstances (e.g., while eating) articulated in OSSE's guidance, all students, staff and visitors, including those who are fully vaccinated, must wear non-medical face coverings or face masks at all times while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and**
- **b. masks must be worn correctly.**

Truth will ensure that all students, staff, and visitors, including those who are fully vaccinated, wear a non-medical face covering or mask while on school grounds, buses, and at school-related activities. Upon arrival into the building, all individuals will be observed and provided with a surgical mask if they are not wearing either a surgical mask or a KN95 mask. Masks will be provided to students during the arrival window, and maintained at the front desk to provide to any visitors who may come into the building throughout the day. All staff members will monitor student mask use and provide guidance if it appears a student is not in compliance.

All students, staff, and visitors must wear surgical masks while inside the building at all times except while eating or participating in physical activities (as long as socially distanced). The school will maintain a ready supply of surgical masks for whenever they are needed.

To ensure easy compliance with this policy, any member of our community who arrives without a face covering, loses or damages their face covering while attending a school activity will be provided a new one. The school will keep a supply of PPE, including masks, until such time as face coverings are no longer required at schools.

### **2. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures in the event that a student, staff member, or visitor is unable or unwilling to wear a face mask at all times.**

If a student, staff member, or visitor is unable to wear a facemask, they will not be permitted to stay inside the building. A member of the administrative team will escort them outside the front entry (if a visitor) or to wait in the courtyard (if a student) to wait for a parent or guardian to pick them up. If the individual has a medical waiver explaining their inability to wear a mask, accommodations will be made on a case by case basis.

### **3. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures to support physical distancing between individuals and within and across groups, including in classrooms, common spaces, during arrival and dismissal procedures, and during extracurricular activities.**

In order to provide personalized instruction, classrooms will be set up to allow distancing where possible but also to be able to serve all students on-campus effectively and safely. Students will be provided with a variety of seating options and will be encouraged to utilize all of them by spreading out among all available areas. Students will be in cohorted groupings so common spaces will be shared by those groups, including extracurricular activities. During arrival and dismissal, students will arrive to and be dismissed from their classrooms, helping to maintain separation between groups.

Each classroom will be organized to support students seated and standing at least 3 feet apart from one another (head to head). Teachers will stay at least 6 feet from students and each other when possible. We are encouraging all staff and eligible students to get vaccinated, and will require masks. The school will not hold in-person assemblies until guidance allows for this. During activities such as PE, recess, and during arrival and dismissal, the school will continue to have signage reminding students and staff to stand at the appropriate social distance for their age.

A slightly staggered dismissal process will be implemented, with each ecosystem of 40 students being dismissed 5 minutes apart at the end of the day. With staff supporting dismissal in the hallways, this will help prevent a build-up of students in shared spaces such as the hallway or library at the end of the day.

The above distancing protocol will hold true for any extracurricular activities on-site or sponsored by Truth PCS as well.

**4. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures regarding the use of cohorts for students and/or staff, including steps to minimize interactions between cohorts, as applicable.**

Classrooms will be organized as ecosystems where 40-45 students will work in two classrooms with two dedicated content instructors and a special education teacher. All instruction will take place within these two classrooms (including any specials) so in the event a student tests positive for COVID-19, the single ecosystem will be able to shift to virtual learning without requiring all students and staff to do the same.

**5. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures to support handwashing and respiratory etiquette including frequent, proper handwashing strategies and encouraging covering coughs and sneezes.**

To help support handwashing and respiratory etiquette, students, staff, and visitors will always be encouraged to wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds. Signage is posted throughout the building alerting all individuals of this. Upon arrival, students should wash their hands with soap and water in the hallway restroom or the sink in their classroom. Throughout the day, students, staff, and visitors will have the

opportunity to wash their hands before and after eating, activities, using the restroom, or after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing. Additionally, numerous dispensers of hand sanitizer that contain at least 70% alcohol are positioned in multiple locations throughout the building to provide any person easy access if they need to sanitize their hands.

The school will reinforce frequent, proper handwashing strategies by staff and students with soap for at least 20 seconds. We will also include hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol throughout the school and in the bathrooms (see next question). We will have all students and staff have the opportunity to wash hands, either with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if not readily available or would compromise cohort isolation practices, hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol at the following times:

- Before and after eating;
- Before and after group activities or student centers;
- After going to the bathroom;
- After removing gloves;
- After blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing.

**6. Provide the LEA's plan to make available adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues) to support healthy hygiene practices including, as relevant, in classrooms, bathrooms, offices and common spaces.**

Healthy hygiene practices help prevent COVID-19 and a number of other illnesses so we always encourage all members of the Truth community to keep their hands clean while on campus. Every classroom, meeting space, or office area has a hand sanitizer dispenser that contains at least 70% alcohol available upon entry. All users of any of these spaces will be encouraged to utilize it. Additionally, many of the classrooms and all of the restrooms have sinks, soap dispensers, and paper towel dispensers. All dispensers are checked throughout the day and refilled or replaced as necessary.

We are planning on having hand sanitizer, tissues in all bathrooms, classrooms, and common areas and will do weekly supply checks. We will also seek to have soap through hands-free dispensers and paper towels in every bathroom. These will be checked on a nightly basis by our custodial staff.

**7. Provide the LEA's policies and procedures to acquire, distribute and support the appropriate use of PPE including gowns/coveralls, gloves, surgical masks, eye protection (face shield or goggles) and N95 masks, as relevant and necessary.**

Truth will provide all staff, students, and visitors to the building with surgical masks for use while on campus. They will be provided by the arrival team during the student arrival window each morning, available

at the front desk for any visitors arriving throughout the day or to replace a mask throughout the day, and will also be available in our materials storage room fully available to any staff member who needs masks for themselves or their students.

### Maintain Clean and Healthy Facilities

8. Provide the LEA's schedule for routine cleaning of rooms, surfaces and objects, including high touch objects and surfaces (e.g., pens, keyboards, elevator buttons, light switches, handles, stair rails, faucets, phones, doorknobs, grab bars on playgrounds).

		Throughout the day	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Classroom	Floors of classrooms		X		
	Student desks, chairs		X		
	Teacher desks, chair		X		
	Walls and white boards			X	
	Manipulatives, text books, etc.				X
	Pens, pencils, white board markers, crayons, markers			X	
Hallway/Stairs	Fixtures (switches, knobs, buttons)	X			
	Railings	X			
	Lockers				X

	Floors of hallways	X			
Office and Common Area	Pens, pencils				X
	Fixtures (switches, knobs, buttons)	X			
	Chairs				X
	Copiers, etc.			X	
Bathrooms	surfaces	X			
	floor	X			
	Fixtures, handles, switches, faucets	X			
Outdoor Space	Playground				X
	Balls, toys				X
Other					

**9. Provide the LEA's cleaning and disinfecting protocols in the event that (1) a student, staff member, or visitor develops symptoms of possible COVID-19 while in the school; or (2) if the school is notified that a student, staff member or visitor who tested positive has been in the school.**

We will follow OSSE's guidance and recommendations on how to disinfect and clean when a member of our community either develops symptoms of COVID-19 while in school or tests positive.

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case in the school community when it has been 24 hours or less since the sick person was in the school, Truth will control spread by disinfecting all exposed materials and limiting

personnel from entering the contaminated area(s). No individual(s) will be allowed in the potentially contaminated area(s) directly following identification of a known positive case without gloves and masks and other PPE, as deemed necessary. JLL, school cleaning service, will be notified and asked to conduct thorough cleaning and disinfecting.

After the contaminated area has been blocked off, the exterior windows will be opened to allow for increased circulation. The windows will remain open as long as the rest of the facility is occupied, and closed upon arming of the security system.

Cleaning and disinfection will begin no sooner than 24 hours after the contaminated areas in the building have been initially blocked off.

All areas used by the individual who tested positive for COVID-19, such as tables, chairs, offices, restrooms, common areas, shared learning equipment, and chromebook will be cleaned and disinfected. Chemicals used will meet the EPA-registered disinfectant on [List N: Disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19) (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>).

If it has been more than 24 hours or less than three days since the sick person was in the school, all areas used by the individual who tested positive for COVID-19, such as tables, chairs, offices, restrooms, common areas, shared learning equipment, and chromebook will be cleaned and disinfected. Chemicals used will meet the EPA-registered disinfectant on [List N: Disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19) (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>).

#### **10. Provide the LEA's plan to make available sufficient and appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies.**

Our cleaning vendor for the academic year provides the appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies as well as requires staff members to wear gloves while cleaning and disinfecting spaces throughout the building. Their work is monitored by members of the Truth operations team and if any compliance issues arise, the building management company will be notified immediately.

We will run our own, separate supply inventory of classroom disinfectant on a monthly basis to ensure that we have appropriate disinfection supplies.

#### **11. Provide the LEA's plan to perform necessary maintenance to ventilation and water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) so that they are ready for use and occupancy and are adequately maintained throughout the operating period.**

1800 Perry St NE has been occupied by various tenants over the course of the spring and summer, and so the building itself has not gone unused. In case of future shut-downs, however, Truth will keep in mind the guidance that buildings reopening after a prolonged shutdown should ensure building systems, such as ventilation and water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains), are safe to use.

## Ventilation

If there is a prolonged shutdown during SY 2020-2021, prior to reopening Truth will engage with JLL (the HVAC maintenance organization) to ensure the systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. While thermostat settings might be slightly adjusted during a shutdown period, the system itself will continue to be operational to ensure that air is circulating in the building and to protect contents within the building. Before the reopening of the school, settings could be readjusted for the return of students and staff. If there is any identified or perceived risk to air quality, windows and doors will be opened (where possible) to maximize air quality for occupants while considering safety and health risks such as risk of falling, outdoor air quality triggering asthma symptoms, building fire safety, and security.

## Water System

Prior to reopening after any prolonged shutdown, Truth will work with JLL (the building maintenance partner) to flush all water systems to clear out stagnant water and replace it with fresh water. This process will remove any metals (e.g., lead) that may have leached into the water and minimize risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water following [CDC guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>) and as described below by building maintenance staff:

- Flush hot and cold water through all points of use such as sinks, drinking fountains, toilets, urinals, and showers.
- Water heater will be set to 140 degrees Fahrenheit and hot water will be flushed at each fixture using hot water until its maximum temperature is reached by building maintenance staff.

Additional water using devices, such as the warming kitchen's ice machine and the hallway bottle fillers, will be flushed in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.

## Response to a Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Case

### 12. Describe the LEA's policies and procedures to:

- **a. Comply with the requirement to not admit or to dismiss any student, staff member or visitor who is COVID-19 positive or otherwise meets criteria for exclusion, per OSSE's guidance; and**
- **b. Dismiss any individual or cohort that is potentially exposed to COVID-19 within the school setting.**

If and when a student presents a symptom of COVID-19 prior to entering the school-building, that student will not be permitted to enter the building and will be sent home (and their parent will be contacted). If and when a student begins presenting a symptom while at school, that person will go to an isolation space and



will be monitored until a parent is able to pick them up and get them home. In the event of a positive COVID-19 case within our school, we will follow the guidelines of 10-day quarantines for all non-vaccinated individuals that have been identified as close-contacts. For staff and students who are vaccinated, they will be able to continue attending in-person school in their cohort. For those students who must quarantine, we will follow the following school extended absence policies for staff and for students:

- Attendance will be taken period by period based on real-time touchpoints with teachers and co-teachers;
- The co-teacher for any given core contact class (STEM or Humanities) will be the primary POCs for quarantining students for that class.

In the event of an unexpected closure or partial closure, we will communicate with families using multiple methods. The Executive Director, Principal, and Director of Operations will convene (in person or via phone) to confirm the situation and to make sure each is fully aware of the status and details. Next, the staff and families immediately affected by the closure will be sent an email to notify them, and then the larger school community will also be sent an email. All of this should happen within 30 minutes of the initial determination.

Following that, the team will make personal phone calls to each of the families and staff affected by the closure, and will follow up with a text message in any case where the phone call did not result in a direct conversation. All of this should happen within 60 minutes of the initial determination. We will respond to questions in the moment, but will also compile an “FAQ” doc that will be sent as follow-up. Families will be encouraged to call or text us directly on the school line (202-747-0904) if they have questions.

### **13. Provide the LEA's plan to comply with the requirements to:**

- **a. Identify a staff member as the COVID-19 point of contact (POC) to whom families, staff, contractors and vendors should report a positive case of COVID-19 and who is responsible for reporting positive cases of COVID-19 to DC Health;**
- **b. Report any applicable positive COVID-19 case in a student, staff member or essential visitor to DC Health on the same day the school is notified;**
- **c. Not exclude students or staff with pre-existing health conditions that present with specific COVID-19-like symptoms on the basis of those specific symptoms, if a healthcare provider has provided written or verbal documentation that those specific symptoms are not due to COVID-19.**

Our COVID-19 point of contact is Ryan Abel, the Director of Operations at Truth PCS. Our choice was to have someone who will be in regular contact with families, staff, contractors, and vendors and report positive cases of COVID-19 to DC Health.

Our reporting plan of applicable positive COVID-19 cases in a student, staff member, or essential visitor to DC Health will include both how staff, families, and vendors know to contact us when a member of our community has a positive test result. The COVID-19 POC will be able to receive calls throughout the day and into the evening hours. The COVID-19 POC may also proactively reach out to families of students, staff,

and visitors who had symptoms or have been absent to inquire. All confirmed reports will be shared with DC Health in a means that is requested by them.

Ensuring that all staff and students learn as often on-site as possible, we will not exclude students and staff with COVID-like symptoms if they have provided written or verbal guidance from a medical professional that such symptoms are chronic and unrelated to COVID. To this end, our COVID-19 POC may review all of our daily screening questions to ensure that students or staff with preexisting symptoms have not been exposed. In some cases, the COVID-19 POC may seek the counsel of the school nurse.

**14. Provide the LEA's procedures to support DC Health with contract tracing in the event of a positive case of COVID-19.**

Truth plans to use [OSSE's daily screening form](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/COVID-19_Daily_Screening_Tracker_Children_12.21.20.pdf) ([https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page\\_content/attachments/COVID-19\\_Daily\\_Screening\\_Tracker\\_Children\\_12.21.20.pdf](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/COVID-19_Daily_Screening_Tracker_Children_12.21.20.pdf)) and, per the form's guidance, we will store records of the form "for 30 days in order to support DC Health with contact tracing efforts should a positive COVID-19 incident occur within the facility."

Ryan Abel, our COVID-19 POC, will report all positive cases and contact with positive cases to DC Health, as described in Section N. of the [Health and Safety Guidance](#) from OSSE. The COVID-19 POC will contact DC Health if a staff member, essential visitor, or student notifies the school that they (or their student) tested positive for COVID-19 if the individual was on school grounds or participated in school activities during their infectious period. Immediately upon learning of the positive case, the COVID-19 POS will notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website using the [Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form](#) (<https://redcap.doh.dc.gov/surveys/index.php/surveys/?s=PCPP97J4EL>).

**15. Describe how the LEA will notify the school community, as appropriate, of the positive case and corresponding actions taken by the LEA.**

Truth has a communication protocol in place that protects the privacy of individuals and alerts their families and staff to a COVID-19 case. No personal names or identifying information of students that have confirmed positive are shared broadly with the larger parent community. Communication is to be completed, per DC Health directive and will include:

- Notification to all staff and families in the event of change of school schedule,
- Notification to those staff and families of students in close contact with the individual and will state the requirement to quarantine in a manner as directed by DC Health; and
- Notification to the entire program that there was a COVID-19 positive case, those impacted have been told to quarantine, and all areas that the individual was in contact with will be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected. This information will be provided by email.

As mentioned previously, in the event of an unexpected closure or partial closure, we will communicate with families using multiple methods. The Executive Director, Principal, and Director of Operations will convene (in person or via phone) to confirm the situation and to make sure each is fully aware of the status and details. Next, the staff and families immediately affected by the closure will be sent an email to notify them, and then the larger school community will also be sent an email. All of this should happen within 30 minutes of the initial determination.

Following that, the team will make personal phone calls to each of the families and staff affected by the closure, and will follow up with a text message in any case where the phone call did not result in a direct conversation. All of this should happen within 60 minutes of the initial determination. We will respond to questions in the moment, but will also compile an “FAQ” doc that will be sent as follow-up. Families will be encouraged to call or text us directly on the school line (202-747-0904) if they have questions.

Truth has a protocol in place to protect the privacy of the individuals while alerting families and staff to mitigate spread. Specifically, the protocol requires that the COVID-19 POC notify either the entire school or the impacted individuals within the cohort of the positive case. The COVID-19 POC will work closely with DC Health to determine whether the students and staff within the infected person’s cohort may stay at school or be sent home and for how long. The COVID-19 POC will update impacted families and staff on how to participate in off-site learning until it is safe to return to on-site learning.

Truth will comply with all OSSE related guidance in planning for responding to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases. We will comply with the requirement to not admit or to dismiss any student, staff member or visitor who is COVID-19 positive or otherwise meets criteria for exclusion, per OSSE’s guidance.

To meet the needs of our diverse community, details on these topics will be available in all languages that our community requires as indicated on the Student/Family Home Language Surveys.

## **COVID-19 Testing and Vaccines**

**16. If applicable, describe the LEA's current or planned COVID-19 testing protocol for symptomatic and/or asymptomatic students and/or staff, including steps the LEA will take to encourage participation in the testing program. Please include the LEA's plan to ensure that results of such testing programs are reported to DC Health per DC Health’s COVID-19 reporting requirements: [dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements](https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements).**

Truth’s COVID-19 testing protocol for SY20-21 and summer 2021 programming requires a negative COVID-19 test of 14 days or less in order for the student or staff member (regardless of vaccination status) to be permitted on-campus. Through our testing partner Curative, we are able to offer on-campus testing to any member of our community who needs it whenever it is needed. We will maintain this relationship into the fall, and will encourage all eligible members of our community to receive a free COVID-19 vaccine and will

continue to test in the manner best deemed appropriate by our families, leadership, and staff.

Truth tests all students bi-weekly through our partnership with Curative Labs. Tests are conducted by Curative employees and not by Truth staff.

**17. Provide the LEA's plans to support COVID-19 vaccination of staff and students, as eligible, including efforts to encourage participation in public and community-based vaccination opportunities.**

Truth believes and understands the importance of COVID-19 vaccinations, so when school staff were prioritized for shots earlier in the year, we ensured appropriate coverage was provided for all staff members who chose to get vaccinated - both to receive the shot as well as any recovery time needed. We continue to strongly encourage (but not require) staff members to receive the vaccine by sharing information provided by the DC Department of Health. Our parent community additionally is actively involved with encouraging vaccines for both adults and eligible children in their families.

**Students with Disabilities**

**18. Provide the LEA's plans to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities with respect to its health and safety policies and procedures.**

Meeting the individual needs of each of our learners is built into our academic model, and this is no different when it comes to meeting the safety needs for all of our students. Based upon coordination between the family, our Special Education team, and our Operations team, individual safety plans will be developed (as needed) for any students with disabilities.

**Training, Technical Assistance, and Monitoring**

**19. Please provide the LEA's plan to provide training and technical assistance on its policies and procedures to safely reopen schools in accordance with the DC Health Guidance for Schools and the OSSE Health and Safety Guidance for Schools, including:**

- a. who will receive training and technical assistance; while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and
- b. the topics that the training and technical assistance will address; and
- c. how and by whom the training and technical assistance will be delivered.

Audience	Topic	Trainer/ TA provider	Date Range
<i>School Staff</i>	Daily COVID-19 safety protocols	Ryan Abel, Director of Ops	August 13
<i>Students</i>	Daily COVID-19 safety protocols	Ryan Abel, Director of Ops	August 27
<i>Parents</i>	Daily COVID-19 safety protocols	Ryan Abel, Director of Ops	Week of August 30

**20. Provide the LEA's plan to monitor the implementation of the health and safety plans at each campus, including how, when and by whom the implementation will be monitored, and how the LEA will respond if a given campus is not adhering to the plan.**

Truth PCS only consists of a single campus. We plan to communicate key health and safety policies and procedures with students' families and staff via weekly email newsletters, social media, our orientation events, and monthly community meetings. To meet the needs of our diverse community, details on these topics will be available in all languages that our community requires as indicated on student/Family Home Language Surveys.

**21. Describe the LEA's plans to communicate key health and safety policies and procedures to students, families, staff and visitors.**

Health and safety is important at Truth and to ensure that key policies and procedures are communicated, we will have agenda items during our family and student orientations to review key information including what the proper safety protocols are for when students are on-campus. Additionally, during staff orientation, we will discuss any student facing rules and procedures for both staff to abide by but also to enforce as we keep the school community safe.

Any individuals who are found to be violating any policies and procedures will be followed up with directly. If there are larger issues or any changes needed to any of our protocols, this will be communicated via email to all families along with a community meeting if deemed appropriate. Accommodations will be made for any families who do not speak English with translated documents and meetings.

To meet the needs of our diverse community, details on these topics will be available in all languages that our community requires as indicated on Student/Family Home Language Surveys.